

**December 5, 2011**

**Press Release** | Contact: Jen Gilbreath (202) 225-6416

---

*Plans will close Gateway Processing Center and local offices*

**WASHINGTON, DC--**U.S. Congressman Peter DeFazio (D-Springfield) responded to the United States Postal Service's announcement to move forward on a plan to end next day mail service, severely restrict service to rural communities, close processing facilities significantly delaying mail service, and ultimately lay off an estimated 100,000 people. Today's announcement puts the Gateway Mail Processing Center in jeopardy.

USPS previously announced that several post offices in DeFazio's district would be closed if the postmaster's plan is carried out. Post offices in danger of being closed include Agness, Broadbent, Cascadia, Deadwood, Gardiner, Swisshome, Tiller and Walton.

DeFazio called for the current Postmaster General to be fired for his lack of imagination or initiative to save the postal service.

"This would be an incredible blow to our economy," said DeFazio. "With real unemployment at 16% we cannot afford another 100,000 people laid off. I've already heard from small business owners that rely on USPS and are concerned that this plan would kill their businesses. Some rural Oregonians would have to drive 15 or 20 miles to access their mail. Subscribers of small rural weekly newspapers would have to wait 7-9 days for their papers to be delivered. This is a short sighted proposal that fails to address the serious long term issues facing USPS."

***To access DeFazio's 12/5 floor speech on USPS, click here:***

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3p-myaEd2Hs&feature=g-all>

A transcript of DeFazio's floor speech on USPS is below:

"Later today, something stunning is going to happen that will catch many Americans by surprise. The so-called Postmaster General is going to announce details that will lead to the end of the United States Postal Service and universal postal delivery in this country.

"This is an incredible blow to our economy. They are talking about closing processing centers. Let me just be specific. In my area, they are talking about closing the Eugene-Springfield processing center.

That means if I mail a letter from Springfield to Eugene, which is six or seven miles away, it will be carried by truck to Portland, Oregon and sorted there and trucked back down, sometime, that week.

"They are saying they will no longer guarantee one day or two-day delivery on first class mail. We don't have Saturday delivery under this plan, so if you mail a letter or a bill on Wednesday, it won't get there until the next Monday. They will drive more people to use the services that have cut into their revenues.

"But some people don't have that option and some things are essential to commerce in this country. There are many, many businesses that will be affected by these delays. Things like prescription drugs or Netflix mailing DVDs or people buying things on eBay and these things will flood over to U.P.S. and FedEx and further undermine USPS revenues.

"The so-called Postmaster General, who should be fired because of a lack of any imagination or initiative, is proposing the death knell for the postal service. One hundred thousand people will be laid off. And then he is going to close local post offices. Talk about Tiller, OR in my district.

Tiller is sixteen miles to the next town on a windy road subject to heavy rain, subject to black ice and snow in the winter time. Generally elderly population and generally not very affluent. These sorts of closures that will save miniscule amounts of money for the Post Office are going to be death knell blows to small rural communities across America.

“Weekly periodicals. Seven to nine days for your weekly periodicals, that's going to do a great thing for the remaining periodical industry. And again, driving people to look for alternatives that will further undermine their revenues.

“I don't think there could be a more short sighted proposal. There is plenty of blame going around because this congress has failed to act. The postal service overpaid \$7 billion into a federal retirement account but the Republicans are refusing to give the money back to the post office. They would rather lay off 100,000 people and they think somehow the private sector will take this over. Tell me who in the private sector is going to deliver a letter for 45 cents to a small rural community 40 or 100 miles from the nearest sorting facility? That's not going to happen. These people will be deprived of any meaningful service. There are other critical reforms that could be undertaken short of dismantling, killing the United States Postal Service. If these proposals go forward and this congress continues to fail to act, the Postmaster General gets to continue to put in place his vision of a future for the postal service, and the White House continues to be silent, we will no longer have a postal service in this country.

“That would be an incredible blow to our economy, future and prestige of the United States of America. We will be the first developed nation on earth without a postal service just like we are without universal health care.”

- 30 -